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DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC FEELINGS
IN PRE-SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN
IN SISTERS SERVANTS' NURSERIES

Carrying out the extremely important task of developing religious and patriotic feelings in preschool-aged children assumes familiarity with and respect for the laws of children's development at the early stage of their lives as well as the context in which it takes place. This task has its deep theoretical justification as well as a rich practical dimension. Theoretical justification and implications for putting theory into practice are derived from the achievements of developmental psychology, pedagogy, theology, axiology and sociology. A valuable source of information about this issue is also found in the notes by Edmund Bojanowski¹. On this basis, both the curriculum and practice of preschool education provided by Sisters Servants according to E. Bojanowski's pedagogical concept were developed. This curriculum², adapted to the currently valid core curriculum of preschool education³, is aimed at the

¹ Archiwum Główne Służebniczek Dębickich w Dębicy (the Main Archive of Dębica's Sisters Servants in Dębica, later referred to as AGSD), *Notatki Edmunda Bojanowskiego* (B, *Edmund Bojanowski's Notes*), the subsequent footnotes quote the relevant card.

² Sr. M. Opiela, Sr. M. Kaput, Sr. E. Piekarz, Sr. A. Kornobis, Sr. Z. Zymróż, Sr. S. Chudzik, *Program wychowania przedszkolnego według koncepcji pedagogicznej bł. Edmunda Bojanowskiego*, extended second edition, Zgromadzenie Sióstr Służebniczek BDNP, Dębica 2015.

³ The Ordinance of the Minister of Education on 30 May 2014 *on the core curriculum of preschool education and general education in particular types of schools* (Journal of Laws of 18.06.2014, item 803)

integral development and education of preschool-aged children. The goal of the article is to present the specificity of accomplishing the task included in the title with regard to the original assumptions concerning education in nurseries and the manners of implementing it in the 160-year-old tradition of the Congregation of Sisters Servants, indicating the theoretical bases and the development of Bojanowski's idea of nursery education. Even though this idea and pedagogical practice originated in the mid-19th century, they remain up-to-date, and even appear as innovatory. It was confirmed in the study conducted as a part of curriculum evaluation⁴.

According to E. Bojanowski's concept, introducing a child into the world of sensations and experiences which also shape their feelings was to proceed taking into consideration their needs and developmental capacities, so that it would contribute to their full development and produce permanent effects in the perspective of their entire life as a person. Therefore, it is necessary to realise what the developmental context in which we undertake this task is, and, consequently, what its conditions are and what its effects should be.

I. THE FACTORS DETERMINING THE EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF A PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILD

The development of psychological and physical characteristics is determined by factors and processes inherent to the child, as well as by those which stimulate him or her from the outside. The former are partially the result of inner development of innate characteristics, partially the result of experience and partially the effect of the child's learning and effort. The second type of conditions which have a great influence

⁴ The validity and dynamics of the implemented contents and educational-didactic activities were presented in: M. Opiela, (ed.), *Dziedzictwo myśli pedagogicznej Edmunda Bojanowskiego we współczesnej edukacji w Polsce i na świecie*, Wyd. KUL, Lublin 2014.

on the development of small children's innate abilities as well as on the early foundation of their development is related to the environment they live in. The factors which are especially significant and universal in their meaning and influence are positive interpersonal relations, role models and patterns of behaviour, the methods of upbringing children, fulfilling roles at an early age, the structure of the pupil's family and stimulation from the environment⁵.

In the emotional development of a child, changes take place leading to differentiation of emotional states, to permanence of feelings and to concealment of the sources of emotions. Elementary sensations and emotions in the period of infancy are shaped on the foundation of physiological needs and their satisfaction. Over time, the range of stimuli to which a child reacts emotionally broadens, and the nature of his or her reactions becomes more diversified. In the toddler period, a child's feelings develop in close connection with his or her activity, needs, aspirations and interests, as well as under the ever-increasing and more complex influence of the environment and the educational process. The expression of a child's emotions becomes increasingly richer, while emotional reactions characterised by great lability more and more often take social forms.

Personality development which takes place during particular periods of a child's life leads to shaping the full personality of an adult, and feelings constitute an important element of its structure. Therefore, it is necessary to form it early and in a skilful way, so that socio-emotional maturity can be achieved. At the same time, it should be remembered that socially beneficial maturity does not appear spontaneously in an undirected process of development. The stimulating influence of the educational environment gains a special significance, as by preventing errors and negligence it ensures that this maturity is shaped as a result of integral development of the whole personality as well as of harmonious development of all psychological functions.

⁵ E. B. Hurlock, *Rozwój dziecka*, Warszawa 1985, p. 64-65.

In the process of a child's psychosocial development, he or she gradually masters and regulates their emotions and subjugates them to the requirements of the environment; then, an increase in the adequacy of the emotions for a given situation ensues, as well as a gradual rise in the number of positive emotional reactions. The development of the abilities to regulate emotional reactions is the effect of both the child's natural biopsychic development and the educational influence of the environment. The feelings of preschool-aged children are characterised by low self-control and high emotional lability; emotional reactions are manifested in an expressive way, as the child is unable to hide and suppress their feelings. They are reflected in children's behaviour, revealed in movements, gestures, exclamations and words. Preschool age is characterised by enrichment and high diversity of emotional life. Therefore, adults should be aware of the fact that a preschool-aged child experiences emotionally the duties imposed on him or her, as well as the difficulties they face when they perform these tasks. During this period, the scope and number of typical situations which are the source of emotional experiences increases. The significance of relationships with peers and children of different ages also rises, although adults remain the most important persons, supporting the psychosocial development of preschool-aged children. Moreover, some emotional reactions are subject to qualitative changes in comparison to the previous stage of development. New, determined influences of the adults mobilise the child to control their emotional experiences. Progressive intellectual development allows the child to orientate themselves adequately in their surroundings, to understand the rules of conduct in repeated circumstances as well as the requirements adults impose on them. Children learn to hide some of their feelings when it ensures a prize, acknowledgement or lets them avoid distress. At the end of preschool period, the child is able to recognise emotional states of other people and adapt their behaviour to them. A child who has been provided with patterns of adequate behaviour by adults is able to experience various types of higher feelings, including religious, patriotic and aesthetic feelings. As the child ma-

tures, those feelings stabilise and deepen, and their expression becomes less violent and exuberant⁶.

All the aforementioned conditions should be taken into account when we intend to influence the development of a child's emotions, which depends both on maturation and learning, and not only on one of these factors. A certain degree of maturity (inner processes of growth according to innate capacities) is indispensable for learning, but without learning, as a result of maturation itself, development would not be possible. A child develops through self-education and learning. A child's maturation and development does not only manifest itself in the learning process; it is also where it takes place⁷. Feelings coexist and, in a sense, cooperate with cognitive processes affecting their course as well as content, and being subject to their regulatory function.

Feelings indicate both the value of life situations for a person and the resulting attitude an individual has towards their environment. Pleasant emotions signal that the objects which arouse them have a beneficial meaning for us, while disagreeable ones show that certain objects are undesirable. Feelings have their roots in certain situations, objects, events and persons one meets in everyday life. These sources of feelings work directly and trigger emotional responses when they truly and specifically appear in our lives. However, there are also indirect sources of feelings. Various emotional experiences become activated in a person when he or she reminisces about past events, images of absent people, or when he or she reads and understands the stories of other people, both real-life and those created by writers' fancy. The content of our imagination and thoughts also triggers various emotional processes⁸. Thanks to consciousness, human emotions are of social nature; they are characterised by content, valence and intensity. A person does not react only to phenomena and objects, but also to the thought about

⁶ See: S. Gerstmann, *Rozwój uczuć*, Warszawa 1986, p. 124-129.

⁷ See: M. Żebrowska (ed.), *Psychologia rozwojowa dzieci i młodzieży*, Warszawa 1979, p. 136-145.

⁸ See: S. Gerstmann, *Rozwój uczuć*, op. cit., p. 11-13.

them. People understand the relationship between the situation causing a feeling and the emotional experience.

When examining the nature and the place of development of higher emotions in relation to the development of the whole personality, it is important to distinguish those emotions by their sources, as it is assumed in psychology:

- Intellectual emotions appear in the process of learning about the reality, in its course and content; they express an exploratory attitude to the world. Among them, curiosity and interest are important, though not unique and not always sufficient, motives for learning. Curiosity is a feeling which triggers rather short-lived, occasional and changeable activities aimed at obtaining information about objects, people, events etc. On the other hand, interests are more permanent; sometimes they accompany people throughout their entire adult lives. They stimulate systematic and persistent cognitive activity directed at a certain domain of reality. Success achieved in the process of learning about the world is a source of satisfaction and triumph; obstacles which appear in the course of solving problems cause the feelings of doubt and discouragement.

- Socio-moral emotions are created in the conditions of people's coexistence and cooperation; their source also lies in the ideals people strive to achieve. They are developed and shaped in the course of a person's participation in the life of the family, preschool and school; subsequently, in the increasingly broader environmental circles and social structures. They are an expression of experiencing the attitude to other people, to the moral norms in force in a given society and to all values. These emotions, both positive and negative, permeate the behaviour of every person. It is thanks to them that an individual's social personality (the so-called „social I") is shaped. Positive socio-moral emotions include kindness, attachment, comradeship and solidarity. An especially complex feeling of this type is patriotism. The closely related emotion of comradeship is the basis of other positive social feelings. It springs from understanding and accepting as one's own the statements about the equality of all people and respect for human dignity; it assumes kind-

ness to others as well as certain leniency towards other people's faults. It enables one to establish close emotional relationships, such as friendship or love, with other people. The category of negative socio-moral emotions includes such as hostility, hatred, envy and various types of aggressive feelings, the most typical of which is anger. Pro-social emotions remain in a positive relationship with experiencing allocentric values (e.g. a sense of belonging in a group and an emotional bond with them) and alterocentric values (e.g. the feelings of friendly liking); on the other hand, they stand in contradiction to asocial emotions (e.g. frequent anxiety and intimidation) as well as anti-social emotions (e.g. jealousy and hostility).

- Aesthetic emotions determine one's attitude to objects characterised by their beauty. They include a peculiar cognitive component which is manifested in the perception of literary, musical or visual arts works⁹.

During the preschool period, an activity which is significant for experiencing and shaping feelings is play, related both to real actions and imaginary situations. It is most often a source of positive feelings and is connected with pleasure which accompanies the activity. Though the importance of children's spontaneous play should not be downplayed, a particular role is performed by didactic play organised by the teacher. Thematic games provide children with opportunities to assume specific roles, to broaden the range of experiences, to express one's thoughts and feelings as well as to be in contact with their peers. This is when the process of the maturation of feelings ensues, consisting in the development of higher emotions and the child's ability to control their affections and feelings as well as to interiorise motor-verbal manifestations. The child becomes aware of the relationship between an emotion and the item which objectively triggered it. Feelings become directed at specific persons and phenomena in an increasingly stable manner. This transition from unconscious to higher emotions takes place in course of action as the child reacts emotionally to the situation they experience and they respond emotionally to imagined facts and events. Events, knowl-

⁹ See: *ibidem*, p. 16 -17.

edge, activities transferred in educational situations and experienced by a child in the form of play in a peer group, with the participation of the teacher, create beneficial conditions for the harmonious development of child's cognitive, social, moral and aesthetic emotions¹⁰.

Between the ages of three and seven, higher emotions can be shaped in class, in mutual relationships and cooperation between preschoolers. A child is capable of passing from short-lived and changeable though strong passions and affections to experiencing deep and increasingly conscious feelings, from unconscious to higher emotions: cognitive, socio-moral and aesthetic. These are more objective and at the same time objectified emotional states, which are directed to a larger and larger extent at specific persons and phenomena as well as at their qualities¹¹.

2. SOURCES, DEVELOPMENT AND FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC FEELINGS

It is assumed that religious feelings cannot be differentiated from non-religious ones in terms of terms of subjective emotional state, but they will be experienced as love, gratitude, commitment, fear, guilt etc., similarly to interpersonal feelings¹². Analogously, patriotic feelings do not constitute any special category of psychological states. As any other feelings, they can have various degrees of intensity, depending on the emotional sensitivity of the subject (that is, of the person who experiences them), as well as on their causes. The factor which leads us to describe feelings as religious or patriotic is their source, the object which triggered them and at which they are directed.

A person's religiosity and patriotism, including religious and patriotic feelings which are their specific manifestations on the level of

¹⁰ See: M. Żebrowska (ed.), *Psychologia rozwojowa...*, op. cit., p. 398-401; 487-493.

¹¹ M. Przetacznikowa, „Wiek przedszkolny,” in: M. Żebrowska (ed.), op. cit., p. 487-490.

¹² Rev. J. Prusak SJ, „Uczucia religijne: definicja niedefiniowalnego,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, vol. 33 (3136), 16.08.2009.

consciousness and social behaviours, do not determine the essence of religion. Religious feelings are experiences which a person becomes aware of and expresses in a situation of a personal bond with God. They determine the dynamics of the religious involvement of a person who has accepted supernatural values and implements them in their life; they also inspire behaviours of religious nature. They give a peculiar „colour” to social forms and contents of action¹³; they strengthen the motivation for undertaking them; they may make them more elevated or unselfish. These feelings develop according to the rhythm of personal development and are conditioned by many factors, both individual and inherent to a given family, or coming from a broader environment of direct and indirect influences.

Research shows that patriotism and religiosity are tightly connected. We can distinguish a category of religious-patriotic feelings, which are as if a subsequent stage and, in a way, a synthesis of the developing intellectual, socio-moral and aesthetic emotions. Their formation is a process of development of a new quality of feelings which become more complex. On the one hand, it is the aftereffect of the actualisation of a child's cognitive, social and spiritual capacities; on the other – of the development of their emotional intelligence through education. Emotional intelligence is understood as a system of competences allowing one to set goals and pursue them persistently, subordinating to them one's emotions¹⁴.

Religious and patriotic feelings are shaped in a child on the basis of the development of intellectual emotions, in which curiosity and interest can be directed at learning about the elements of reality connected with God, faith and one's homeland. The source of religious feelings is one's developing faith in God. These include admiration, hope, love, happiness, gratitude and religious admiration. The source of patriotic

¹³ See: K. Chałas, A. Maj, J. Mariański, *Wychowanie ku wartościom religijnym*, vol. IV, Lublin-Kielce 2009, p. 43.

¹⁴ See: K. Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro i piękno w wychowaniu człowieka jako osoby*, Katowice 2002, p. 82-87.

feelings is learning about one's homeland, as well as the adults' testimony of the love of it, which is related to the sense of pride in belonging to the given nation, willingness to act for the homeland, the desire to know its history, respect for its symbols etc. These emotions are created and shaped in the relationships with people and God, at first – in the family, and then, according to the direction the family has given to the process, in preschool, at school, in communities and groups. The factors which are extremely important in provoking and developing them are symbols, gestures and the related ceremonials, as they express the attitude to oneself and other people, to God, homeland and values. It is in this context that, among others, aesthetic emotions are distinctly revealed.

The period between the ages of three and seven is important for the development of a person's religiosity, as it is then that the manners of holistic perception of religious and non-religious reality are shaped¹⁵. A preschooler who has received proper religious education can independently discover the meaning of some religious events, signs and symbols. Their prayer becomes increasingly independent and creative, but motives for it are egoistic. In a child of this age, religiosity is shaped mainly through the participation in religious activities of his or her own family. It is through such participation that a child's bond with the community of believers is created and manifested, as well as in assemblies during the liturgy, various church services, in groups taking part in catechesis¹⁶. The source of religious feelings is faith. In the first six years of life, thanks to the ability to assimilate easily, and as a consequence to adapt as their own, religious experiences from close persons and significant others, a child participates in their faith, experiences the presence of God as friendly and almighty. In this way, the sphere of inner feelings and experiences relating to God is shaped in a child. Thus, the aforementioned phenomena can be seen as the process of shaping the image of God in an individual as a consequence of a person discovering the presence and acts of God in their life and the surrounding world. The

¹⁵ Cz. Walesa, *Rozwój religijności człowieka*, vol. I, *Dziecko*, Lublin 2005, p. 217.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

experience of trust, friendship and love in relationships with significant others is important for discovering the mystery of God and for establishing a relation with Him. This, in turn, enables a child to discover an inner commitment to respect for God similar to that they have for those persons. Thanks to their natural ability to perceive, explore and learn, children open themselves to God and the highest values¹⁷.

Studies confirm that patriotism develops on the grounds of integrated religious life and that the religious attitude provides a strong basis for shaping the patriotic attitude. Shaping patriotism and patriotic feelings is difficult without a close connection with religious values and shaping religiosity¹⁸.

The basic sources of patriotism include religious-patriotic education, instilling patriotic feelings at home, in religious communities, at school and by one's peers, as well as passing from feelings to specific activities. A child can become a patriot if they gradually acquire knowledge about their nation and homeland, get to know the notion of the common good and increasingly feel a sense of belonging to a group, which constitutes the foundation of understanding the notion of homeland. In education, we strive to shape a fully patriotic attitude, or one in which the understanding of the importance of homeland and lively patriotic feelings lead one to respecting it and acting for its benefit, adequately to a given person's needs and capacities¹⁹.

Feelings are decisive for perceiving and respecting values; therefore, the concordance between denotative and connotative meaning of terms and symbols in religious, moral, social and patriotic education is so important. Thus, developing feelings – especially religious and patriotic feelings – in the process of education should not and cannot occur with-

¹⁷ Z. Marek SJ, *Wychować do wiary. Zagadnienia wychowania religijnego dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym*, Kraków 1996, p. 48-49.

¹⁸ Rev. A. Sułek, *Psychospołeczne uwarunkowania postaw wobec ojczyzny i narodu*, Lublin 2007, after A. Cichobłazińska, „Szkoła patriotyzmu,” *Niedziela*, vol. 35, 2007, p. 16-17.

¹⁹ A. Cichobłazińska, „Szkoła patriotyzmu,” *Niedziela*, vol. 35, 2007, p. 16-17.

out referring to values. On the one hand, religious-patriotic feelings derive from the highest values, such as truth (intellectual emotions), good (socio-moral emotions) and beauty (aesthetic emotions); on the other, it is in the relation to these values that such feelings are expressed in all their complexity, as well as in the relation to God as the highest, absolute Good, Truth and Beauty²⁰.

In the Bible, which constitutes Sacred Scripture for the Christians, feelings are important manifestations of spiritual life and can be shaped through the cooperation between nature and grace. Experiencing joy, gratitude, hope, peace and compassion is a sign of sanctification, transformation and conversion²¹. Religious feelings provide the dynamism of a person's bond with God, modifying their behaviour by setting significant goals, implementing decisions important for life, inspiring interests and preferences concerning one's involvement in realising and transmitting the highest values. On the other hand, as the child develops, feelings become the consequence of knowing these values; they include both pleasant and disagreeable emotions and are manifested in various experiences, states, forms of involvement and behaviours.

Important guidelines concerning the development of religious feelings are included in the teachings of the Church in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which uses the notion of feelings in the context of their moral evaluation. It states that feelings or passions are emotions or movements of the sensitive appetite that incline us to act or not to act in regard to something felt or imagined to be good or evil. As natural components of the human psyche, they form the passageway and ensure the connection between the life of the senses and the life of the mind. The Catechism lists the basic feelings which include love and hatred, desire and apprehension, joy, sadness and anger. In the movements of the sensitive appetite, there is neither moral good nor evil; but insofar as they engage reason and will, there is moral good or evil in them. Thus, they can be taken up in the virtues or perverted by the

²⁰ K. Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro...*, op. cit., p. 37.

²¹ See: J. Prusak, *Uczucia religijne...*, op. cit.

vices. Among many feelings a person can have, the most fundamental passion is love, aroused by the attraction of the good; it causes a desire for the absent good and the hope of obtaining it. Satisfying this desire brings the pleasure and joy of the good possessed. All other affections have their source in this first movement of the human heart toward the good. The apprehension of evil, which is the lack of good or its opposite, causes hatred, aversion, and fear of evil; this movement ends in sadness at some present evil, or in the anger that resists it²².

If religiosity is understood as a personal and positive relationship between human and God, which is expressed in experiences and psychological states²³, and we refer the notion of good to God in whom the desire to attain it is fulfilled in the perfect way, then the feelings whose source is faith and which are directed at God are of religious nature. The Catechism states that in Christian life, the Holy Spirit himself accomplishes his work by mobilising the whole being, with all its sorrows, fears and sadness, while in Christ human feelings are able to reach their consummation in charity and divine beatitude²⁴.

Patriotism has its roots in the sense of a bond with the parents and the family in which cherished patriotic values awaken the child's feelings for the whole reality in which they are born, live, develop and act in a free and responsible way for their own happiness and for the common good. The most basic frame of reference of the patriotic attitude is biological and spiritual descent from specific people, but other very important factors are the place of birth, land, culture, language, region, nation, state, its civilisation and history as well as religion. Patriotism is a complex attitude encompassing the intellectual sphere, the sphere of values, assessment, judgments, feelings as well as the ensuing conduct and action, which assumes the necessary knowledge of the homeland, a sense of love and duty to it as well as generous acts for its good.

²² See: *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, Loyola University Press, Chicago 1994, 1763 - 1775

²³ Cz. Walesa, *Rozwój religijności...*, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁴ CCC, 1769.

The proper understanding of patriotism is also promoted by theology, which suggests a specific hierarchy of values on account of which we serve our homeland. The love of the homeland does not contradict the love of the whole humanity; quite the opposite – it assumes loving all people, which stems from loving one’s parents and the whole homeland.

Patriotic feelings developed on the basis of the Catholic religion lead to a healthy patriotism, as the highest principle of life and relationships in Catholicism is the commandment to love God and your neighbour. It is the source of norms and behaviours which let one avoid two extremities: nationalism and cosmopolitanism. The Church teaches all Christians in this respect in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*: „Citizens must cultivate a generous and loyal spirit of patriotism, but without being narrow-minded. This means that they will always direct their attention to the good of the whole human family, united by the different ties which bind together races, people and nations (the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* 75)”.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the fourth commandment of the Decalogue: „Honour thy father and thy mother” - requires honour, affection, and gratitude of citizens toward their country, and to those who administer or govern it²⁵. Patriotic love originates in the love of the people one holds close and is similar to the love of one’s parents. Family and nation are the primeval, natural communities, whose members are united by the ties of „blood” and „land” (a common home).

The source of patriotic feelings is familiarity with one’s homeland, as who wants to love their country needs to get to know it; the more they know about it, the more they will love it²⁶. The factors which shape patriotism, such as religiosity, are numerous and they are developed as a result of long-term, slow processes based in the culture and tradition of a given society. For that reason, they can neither be created artificially and suddenly, nor easily destroyed. Therefore, it is so significant in the process of developing patriotic feelings to provide and deepen the knowledge about

²⁵ CCC no. 2199.

²⁶ J. M. Bocheński, *O patriotyzmie*, Warszawa 1989.

one's homeland, its history, national heroes, literature and art; to shape the respect for the mother language and for the characteristic traits of a given nation, as well as attachment to the homeland etc.

Patriotism is a complex notion; it has a national, state, civilisation- and spiritual-religious dimension. The progressive socio-cultural transformations in the world bring about a change in both the context of relations in building personal and social identity, and of the activities aimed at shaping religious and patriotic feelings. Nowadays, what makes us reflect on the essence and value of religious and patriotic feelings and cultivate them are the acts of offending these feelings which appear currently, aimed at people who have faith and love their homeland. They take the form of scorning, ridiculing, or even aggressively desecrating the symbols and manners of expressing these emotions. In this context, it becomes vital to shape religious and patriotic feelings, as well as the awareness of their place and significance in the human life, in the process of educating a child from their youngest years. It is decisive for the proper manner of expressing those affections, but also for respecting them in others, which is often hard to find in the contemporary reality. Showing regard for religious and patriotic feelings is a question of a society's culture, understood as respect for what is important and valuable for particular citizens. These passions have different levels of significance, with religious emotions usually aspiring to be superior to others. For believers, God is more important than their homeland, which is in turn more important than social norms, though it is difficult to determine a clear hierarchy here²⁷. Faith and patriotism, as well as the manners of experiencing and expressing them are changing, which does not mean that religious and patriotic symbols are simply of a contractual nature. Humans as spiritual-corporeal beings need symbols which express their religious and patriotic convictions and feelings.

A path to developing religious and patriotic feelings, which constitute an important element of human personality, is the process of

²⁷ Rev. A. Szostek, „Nie milczeć, tylko mądrze mówić,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, vol. 33 (3136), 16.08.2009.

integral education. Through this method, in various situations and interactions, internal processes of maturation and external stimulation, experiences related to the course of time and events in which children participate, they are led to the highest values in a natural way. Discussing pedagogy of patriotism as well as patriotism as a virtue, J. M. Bocheński points to educating the mind, imagination, feelings and will. Apart from acquiring knowledge, an extremely important factor in developing patriotism is shaping imagination. The goal of work in this area is providing our memory with numerous lively and strong images of objects, phenomena etc., associated with the feeling of patriotism – as a feeling always ensues from imagination and the better equipped imagination is, generally the stronger the feeling. Moreover, it can be trained directly, by participating in national celebrations, learning songs and getting to know symbols. Such celebrations should be very well prepared, relatively rare and short, purposefully organised in a way which inspires patriotic feelings. It is worth inspiring a solemn attitude, preparing pupils for emotional participation in their course; it is especially desirable that children should sing patriotic songs and present an appropriate attitude to national symbols²⁸.

However, it needs to be borne in mind that such education should be appropriately adapted to a given society's tradition, culture, history or customs, so that it does not become the imposition of foreign ideas. On the other hand, it is indispensable to know the sociocultural factors which affect also children, connected to mass culture, multiculturalism, globalisation and laicisation.

3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY EDUCATION FOR THE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSON

Education is a significant factor in the process of developing feelings. Preschool supports the family so that a child can become familiar

²⁸ J. M. Bocheński, *op. cit.*

with a sufficient number of emotional situations and learn to express his or her feelings, experience them in an appropriate manner and react to a given event. Knowing one's own feelings as well as the feelings of other people will enable a child to consciously guide their behaviour. Acquiring the ability to understand one's emotions leads to understanding oneself, though it is fully possible only in adolescence, once the skill of self-reflection has been formed. Thus, in the process of education, a child slowly „gains access” to positive and negative feelings, is able to experience joy, satisfaction, contentment and love, but also learns to cope with fear, sadness, anger and dissatisfaction.

If religious and patriotic feelings cannot be distinguished as a special category of psychological states with regard to the subjective emotional state, but they are experienced similarly to interpersonal emotions, then attention should be paid to the basis on which they are formed. As higher emotions, they develop on the basis of the child's first experiences in the family. With time, this development takes place in an increasingly complex reality encompassing numerous subjects, and becomes directed at supporting the construction of the child's relationship with God, homeland and nation. This relation is characterised by a strong, positive emotional bond. Early childhood is an essential period in human development, as it is at this stage that our emotional, social, cognitive and physical competences are shaped. Therefore, in view of the child's developmental capacities as well as the permanent influence of the conditions of social life, which undergo constant, dynamic transformations and cause a sense of lack of stability, security and belonging, the bases of religious and patriotic education should be established in early childhood. A skilful transition from focusing on satisfying the needs of younger children to showing values, introducing children to acting and living according to these values in specific situations leads not only to developing habits and skills necessary in life, but also to shaping emotional maturity. A person's maturity is attested to by the richness of their emotional life, but also by the ability to control their feelings. In this respect, an indispensable role is played by educational situations which lead to talking about feelings, naming them, imagining what a person

might feel in a given situation, so that a child by understanding themselves and other people could become capable of empathy as well as of perceiving and respecting emotions of others.

E. Bojanowski, similarly to other promoters of early childhood education he was familiar with (J. Locke, J. Svoboda, J.H. Pestalozzi, L. Chimani, A. Cieszkowski), drew attention to its importance for the subsequent development. Firstly, it ensues from the fact that the capacities developed during this period are of permanent nature and influence the child's attitudes and behaviours throughout his or her life. Secondly, he was convinced that the child's innate inclinations and specific capacities, skilfully identified at this stage, become the foundation of the child's full development according to their natural disposition and individual profile of aptitudes.

Bojanowski recommended that rights of human development should be taken into consideration and that due proportions should be preserved in influencing all areas of an individual's personality. He pointed out that individual capacities of a child should be respected and that development should neither be unnecessarily accelerated nor delayed. The influence on developing religious and patriotic feelings constituted a complementary element of other activities supporting a child's full psychological and spiritual development. At the beginning of the 19th century, J. Svoboda wrote that through frequent conversations, children's linguistic abilities and their cognitive processes (focus, memory, perception) are perfected. In contact with nature, children become familiar with the wisdom and beauty of creation²⁹.

E. Bojanowski, sharing this view, attached great importance to early childhood education, as expressed in a saying in which he compared early education to getting up in the morning and quickly sowing the crops in the field – a metaphor of hard work and committed concern for children's appropriate growth³⁰. He affirmed the dignity of the child and analysed childhood developmental needs; he reflected on the essence of

²⁹ J. Svoboda, *Wykład praktyczny prowadzenia dzieci małych w Ochronie*, (transl. T Nowosielski), Warszawa 1840, p. XIII.

³⁰ AGSD, B-h-1, k.7r.

the child and the nature of childhood as an issue in the individual and social, earthly and supernatural dimension. On the one hand he drew attention to the need for taking into account all areas of a child's life and activity in his or her education; on the other – to the value and role of the family as well as the educational influence of preschool and the environment. Therefore, he viewed the child both in the context of his or her personal condition, dignity, value and happiness, and in the context of values and needs of the family, homeland and Church.

Bojanowski took into account the rights of nature, religion and history, seeing in them the means of harmonious development and education of new generations. He realised that the development of a child's personality, including their feelings which express their attitude to other people, the surrounding world, themselves and values, is the result of patterns conveyed by the parents and the environment. Therefore, he believed that the most important educational method in the nursery was the life testimony of the teacher, who should be guided by the familiarity with children's individual needs and capacities in order to support the harmonious development of their personality as well as shaping appropriate lifelong attitudes towards God, homeland, themselves and other people. The goals of education, which in the preschool period „should not be any form of school teaching, but a school of life”³¹ as well as the methods and means recommended by E. Bojanowski were related to the concern for the child's integral development encompassing the physical, mental, social, cultural, moral and religious area. Especially significant are his words stating that education is „uniting the spirit with sensuality,” and the first steps in this direction concern very small children³². E. Bojanowski recommended that the teachers in nurseries should adhere to the smallest details concerning the principles of early childhood education, as they have their part in achieving the intended aims³³.

³¹ AGSD, B-f-1, k.12v.

³² AGSD, B-h-1, k.19r.

³³ A. Brzeziński, *Wspomnienie o śp. Edmundzie Bojanowskim Fundatorze Zgromadzenia Służebniczek BDNP*, Poznań 1872, p. 12.

In the 1980s, E. Hurlock, describing the dynamics of the process of psychological development, stated that long before any scientific research on children's developmental changes and achievements, it was assumed that the first years of life are decisive for the child's development in the subsequent stages of their life. She refers, among others, to studies on personality which proved that early patterns of behaviour are preserved in many spheres in spite of the passing time. Preschool years, between the ages of two and five, belong to the most important stages of development. It is undoubtedly the period during which the foundations are laid for the complex structures of behaviour, built throughout the child's entire life³⁴.

Not only research, but also experience confirms that early and permanent foundations of a developing person originate at first exclusively at home, in the closest and most constant interpersonal contacts with family members, then with the members of peer groups in the neighbourhood and at preschool. E. Hurlock believes that these foundations are so strongly established that they influence a person's attitudes and behaviours throughout his or her life, and should any changes appear, they will be minimal. At the same time, she justifies the value of learning and experience, which with age play an increasingly dominant role in the child's development and can be directed in a way that would ensure good adaptation. It is in this period that directing education is the most necessary, as early foundations of development are quickly transformed in the patterns of habits and for years affect a person's psychological and social adaptation, regardless of their good or bad, favourable or detrimental nature. Although it is difficult to change them, it is not impossible when children are guided, are strongly motivated to do so themselves and are helped to introduce these changes, while the significant others in their life treat them according to their emotional and social situation³⁵. An extremely significant factor is the life example and help of the teacher accompanying the child in feeling, experienc-

³⁴ See: E. Hurlock, *Rozwój dziecka*, op. cit., p. 62-63.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 66-67.

ing, understanding, differentiating between and verbalising their own affections, as well as in developing the ability to control their emotions without suppressing them.

Respecting the laws of a child's development in the process of educating and teaching them, we contribute to shaping their integrated personality. Therefore, we should be deeply familiar with the child's rights and developmental capacities; we should also be equipped with appropriate personal and professional competences, so that every aspect of development is an integral element of education.

J. Locke highlighted the relationship between moral, mental and physical education, but he was deeply convinced of the necessity for beginning the educational process with a well-thought-out programme in which physical education comes first and is the most important matter in childhood. He believed that the period of a child's life up to the age of seven is decisive in every area for the future formation of human personality, and in taking care of one's proper physical development and health there are no insignificant things. Moreover, in moral education, like in physical education, habits of behaviour should be shaped by exercise and taught using examples more than by presenting principles. If education is so important, then we should be aware of the fact that as a consequence, parents and educators are to meet serious requirements, as their examples of behaviour and moral authority have a decisive influence on the child. The thesis that a child's development should be in accordance with the laws of nature, leads to specific conclusions for education, in which an appropriate moral direction should be given to children; they should also be equipped with such skills and their personality shaped in such a way that the influence of this education is persistent in their whole future lives³⁶.

³⁶ J. Locke, *O edukacji dzieci*. Warszawa 1781, p. 42-59.

4. DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC FEELINGS ACCORDING TO EDMUND BOJANOWSKI'S PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPT

The aim of preschool education is not only to shape of a child's mind, but also to develop their feelings, sensitivity and moral attitude. Preschool pedagogy, child psychology and medical sciences confirm that the process of shaping a child's emotions, his or her psychological and physical health are inseparable and none of these areas can be treated separately. The holistic perception of the spheres of functioning is even more important when educational actions concern higher emotions, when we pass from focusing on satisfying a child's needs to introducing them to the world of values. In E. Bojanowski's pedagogical concept the development of religious and patriotic feelings in a preschool-aged child takes place in the course of the process of integral education of a person³⁷.

Educating for values at preschool should consist in actively supporting the child in his or her development through creating suitable space for them to have different experiences in cognitive, affective and valuation aspect. A child experiences something through imitating distinct patterns, above all those provided by their family. Subsequently, experiencing is completed with learning and employing norms and conventions in a preschool group³⁸.

In shaping a child's religious feelings, it is the family that takes educational priority³⁹. In optimal conditions, they skilfully convey religious content to a child and introduce him or her to religious practices in which it is manifested. Preschool supports the family in this task, respecting and developing the foundation which has already been established. Preschool education presents opportunities for creating new situations of experiencing values for a child, and these experiences are

³⁷ See: M. Opiela, *Integralna pedagogika przedszkolna w systemie wychowania Edmunda Bojanowskiego. Kontynuacja i zmiana*, Wyd. KUL. Lublin 2013, p. 300-306.

³⁸ K. Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro...*, op. cit., p. 72.

³⁹ Z. Marek SJ, *Wychować...*, op. cit., p. 35-39.

available in emotional sensations which have the nature of intentional, or conscious feelings, directed at an object which is external to them⁴⁰.

For practical realisation of the task of developing religious and patriotic feelings, essential elements of this complex process should be indicated. It takes place in many parallel dimensions, which condition and complement one another, and lead to an increasingly fuller development, or maturation. This process is conditioned by the proper development of a child's innate capacities, occurring gradually, according to his or her nature and characteristics, which can be described and explained thanks to psychology. Development is supported and guided by education, in which leading a person from early childhood to emotional maturity has its particular place and importance. Supported with the process of teaching and learning, it becomes a significant link of the mutual exchange of values in the relationship between a child and a parent, a charge and an educator, or in a three-subject relationship between the parents, the child and the preschool teacher.

Values constitute the criteria for the undertaken educational activities aimed at shaping higher socio-moral feelings. In the educational process, E. Bojanowski considered the skilful shaping of religiosity and patriotism as very important, though not a priority in the sequence of actions supporting development. He recommended methods whose goal was, above all, developing religious and patriotic feelings, which find their fulfilment in the love of God and the homeland. However, he did not isolate or overrate them in relation to other dimensions of a child's development; on the other hand, he placed them at the correct stage and in an adequate order, taking into account regularities which should not be ignored.

Religious feelings are at first developed on the basis of the relationship with relatives and their testimony of faith. Justifying the value of early education, E. Bojanowski indicated its practical expression concerning the celebrations of Christmas, their atmosphere, the relat-

⁴⁰ K. Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro...*, op. cit., p. 129.

ed beliefs and customs⁴¹. In the Polish tradition, religious experiences are closely linked in the calendar and in life to the events concerning national anniversaries and holidays, whose solemn atmosphere inspires religious and patriotic feelings. Developed, consolidated and confirmed in preschool education, which is a continuation and enrichment of education in the family, they provide support for the full development of a child in its individual and social dimension. In E. Bojanowski's concept, religious feelings – as very personal affections which are a component and an expression of deep relationships between man and God – open a person up and provoke the need for forming deeper bonds. These can provide the foundation of and the strongest motivation for developing the need for learning about the history of the homeland as well as shaping patriotic attitudes; they can also lead, should a need arise, to sacrificing one's life for the homeland.

These feelings give subtlety and nobleness to human experiences, attitudes and life in its ordinariness, difficulties and everyday toils; they provide an impulse to act and determine the emotional climate in which a person develops respect for religious as well as national principles, values and symbols experienced in lofty rituals. Therefore, concern for the development of religious and patriotic feelings from an early age ensures effective protection against reducing human life to the material or utilitarian dimension, closed in an egoistic and mercenary attitude of individualism without respect for values, principles and norms which condition deep bonds and full development of a person.

The catalogue of feelings which are awoken regardless of the person's will has its equivalent in the catalogue of values, which can provide reference for the acts of will, or the choices made. In this respect, axiology is of help. Values can be identified as vital (utilitarian), cultural (cognitive, aesthetic and social) or moral, which exist in a different way than the remaining ones – they are inherent to people and their actions and demand to be realised. In the development of culture – a spiritual, symbolic world of the humans – a special role is played by religious

⁴¹ AGSD, B-h-1, k.1r.

and moral, as well as by cognitive, aesthetic and social values. Realising the highest values as indispensable in the full development of a person is a path of affirming humanity in an individual, making one aware of specifically human manners of existing, acting and experiencing, of becoming a person⁴². Together with cognitive development (learning about values, gaining axiological experience), education (gradual interiorisation of values) and development of valuation skills, a person's choices can be made in an increasingly responsible and independent way, according to the adopted general social norms. They „can” be and not necessarily are, as it depends on an individual's capacities and freedom. These choices, with regard to religious and patriotic feelings, are related to preparing a person from a young age for assuming cross-generational responsibility. Thus, nowadays many people voice the necessity for decisive and positive argumentation for the meaning of childhood for the whole of individual and communal life⁴³.

When organising children's activities in preschool, we take into account the fact that emotional development in childhood takes place with the participation of different forms of learning, among which actions which provide opportunities for various experiences dominate. They can be the result of practice or simply of repeating a certain activity, which, after a certain time, can lead to changes in behaviour. In this manner, children in early childhood learn to express their emotions in such forms of behaviour which give them most satisfaction, and they avoid opposite ones. In a small child, learning consists in imitating, when they copy what other people are doing in a more or less conscious way. With time, it also consists in identification, when a child attempts to adopt the attitudes, values, motives or behaviour of the person they admire or love. Learning can consist in practicing the selected, directed and purposeful act. During practice, children's conduct is guided by adults or older children, who try to change their behaviour according to

⁴² See: K. Olbrycht, *Prawda, dobro...*, op. cit., p. 126-128.

⁴³ See: D. Waloszek, *Pedagogika przedszkolna. Metamorfoza statusu i przedmiotu badań*, Kraków 2006, p. 75.

patterns which will provide them with well-being and acceptance from the social group⁴⁴.

An author who pointed to the skilful organisation of children's activities was J. Svoboda, to whose guidelines E. Bojanowski referred in his concept. Svoboda believed that children of two to four years of age, in contrast to children in their fifth and sixth year, learn exclusively through play. He recommended that in educating younger children attention should be drawn above all to taking special care of their health and developing their physical strengths. Starting from this assumption, children should be involved in various physical exercises, both in classes inside the nursery and in the garden, where children should spend most of their time playing in the open air and thus find God in nature⁴⁵.

Gradually, under the influence of learning and the impact of the environment, the behaviour accompanying emotions becomes diversified, as children learn to adapt to situations triggering feelings and react in an increasingly accepted way; the intensification of emotions changes and they become more permanent. Partially, it is the result of intellectual development, and partially it is caused by changes in interests and values.

Development of religious feelings takes place in preschool, which is not simply a school, but above all a place of educating. J. Svoboda writes that religious and moral feelings are awoken in children's hearts in situations and events appearing naturally in the life of the family and the nursery. Physical and cognitive development (particularly, the development of concepts) determines the framework of religious and moral education of children⁴⁶.

It has been understood for a long time that the basis of the development of feelings is the process in which children achieve increasingly greater and more complex physical and cognitive agility. Intellectual-

⁴⁴ See: E. Hurlock, *Rozwój dziecka*, op. cit., p. 372-377.

⁴⁵ See: J. Svoboda, *Wykład praktyczny prowadzenia dzieci małych w Ochronie* (transl. T Nowosielski), Warszawa 1840, p. X.

⁴⁶ J. Svoboda, *Wykład praktyczny ...*, „Przedmowa tłumacza,” p. V-VI.

al development of children affects their ability to perceive meanings they have not noticed before, to focus their attention and feelings for a longer time on a specific object. The development of imagination and understanding as well as an increase in the ability to remember and anticipate has a similar influence on a child's emotional reactions. In this way, children become sensitive to stimuli they did not receive in the earlier period of their life.

In his notes, E. Bojanowski, does not include separate contents concerning the world of feelings as it constituted an inseparable element of shaping a mature socio-moral attitude and customs. His guidelines concerning the development of emotions are described today by psychology, which became a separate empirical science after his death. Psychological states, which today we call religious or patriotic feelings, were the result of „educating as preserving the ways of life from which customs are derived”⁴⁷. E. Bojanowski expresses the contents concerning this issue in the description of the child with the use of the theological-philosophical language. Describing specific qualities of the child, he highlights their honesty, openness, innocence and simplicity. Children's statements and reactions are characterised by sincerity and the greater importance of content than of the form. Moreover, E. Bojanowski wrote about experiencing the child's beauty in their simplicity of life. He also stresses that children live in the present and behave according to present circumstances⁴⁸.

In response to children's capacities and needs formulated in this manner, he points to shaping these inner states and sensations in a specific way. Their special importance has already been mentioned in the present article, and the development of religious and patriotic feelings cannot occur separately, as all rituals and customs have a religious-patriotic nature. E. Bojanowski has a strong opinion in this matter, as he claims that children in the nursery should learn life before they learn to read and write. Events which are important for a given community, as

⁴⁷ See: AGSD, B-h-1, k.3r.

⁴⁸ AGSD, B-i-1, k.28r.

long as they are solemnly commemorated, contribute to children's moral growth. Maintaining the traditions of celebrating holidays and festivals is how the legacy of the ancestors is conveyed to children. The customs related to celebrations have a strong influence on children's imagination, contain an important moral message and through symbols they refer to a deeper, spiritual level of meanings⁴⁹.

These forms of acting and expressing the sensations related to following customs and traditions constitute a plane of a child's experiences which lead him or her to the sublimation of feelings. At the same time, they allow a person integrated around higher values to experience admiration. E. Bojanowski expresses it in various manners. He stresses that the essence of beauty lies in the consistency of form and content, consistency of the spirit and its external expression. Living beauty emanates on all areas of life⁵⁰. He believes that life is a harmonious activity of the body and the spirit. In folk art, there is no discrepancy between the form and the spirit. The constant influence of the invisible world on the world explored with the senses creates the poetic layer of life⁵¹.

These recommendations and practice are confirmed by the contemporary psychological and pedagogical theories; they are also reflected in the „Programme of preschool education according to the concept of Bl. Edmund Bojanowski.” Developing religious and patriotic feelings concerns shaping customs, in which four out of six educational-didactic areas were distinguished, apart from the physical and mental one. These include: the social area, which encompasses the appropriate emotional development, as well as shaping social and patriotic attitudes; cultural area – shaping the aesthetic sense; moral area – shaping a noble personality and righteous morals; and religious area – developing and strengthening faith.

The order of these areas in the programme shows great focus on the physical domain in the educational process concerning younger chil-

⁴⁹ AGSD, B-h-5, k. 2v.

⁵⁰ AGSD, B-f-1, k.13r.

⁵¹ AGSD, B-i-1, k.15v.

dren, resulting from their developmental needs and capacities. Gradually, with age, mental, social, cultural, moral and religious education are taken more into account. However, both in the case of younger and older children, the teacher includes all the areas in his or her actions in an individual manner, with a view to gradually realising the goals of preschool education.

In his pedagogical concept, E. Bojanowski emphasises the figures of the child and of the teacher, whose subjective roles, inherent to each of them, he describes in the context created by nature, religion and history. Harmonious, integral development of the child should be supported in the educational process by the teacher, and above all by the example of her life, in which her external, internal and moral characteristics are so significant. The most important „method” in this process is the human. All means, methods of education and its organisation should be skilfully employed in order to achieve the most vital goal – „so that man becomes God’s image and likeness on Earth,” which in reality assumes an integral development of a person with regard to their individual capacities⁵².

Through educational, care and didactic activities, harmoniously ordered in the schedule of the day, week and year, the teacher strives to shape the personality of the pupil, who is to be open to further development, able to achieve full humanity in the future and to creatively transform the reality he or she lives in. Developing religious and patriotic feelings in this process occurs under a great influence of the teacher’s example and the content she conveys, and the child becomes open to referring in their behaviour to personal models: figures from the Bible, saints, historical figures, important people. This process, in turn, adequately guided by the teacher, helps the child to develop increasingly responsible attitudes towards themselves, other people, the homeland and God. It serves the purpose of shaping a healthy and strong personality as well as a noble character. A person who is socialised and independent will be able and will want to use the acquired knowledge and skills in

⁵² See: M. Opiela, *Integralna pedagogika przedszkolna...*, op. cit., p. 232-256.

order to make themselves and the world better, making a commitment to the good and consciously rejecting the evil.

Basing his pedagogical concept on the Christian system of values, E. Bojanowski stressed the main role of the supernatural factor and of an individual as a personal embodiment of values in educating children. The strategy of educational influence in nurseries is giving testimony which consists in triggering in the pupil the process of identification which takes place after assimilating the experiences of other people, and through including them in one's own life, it affects the development of personality, including the development of higher feelings. It is extremely important in education, whose task is to form a young person into an exemplary patriot and a good person, created in the image of God-human.

In various educational situations, the child acquires the abilities to establish and shape personal relationships with people and with God, in an attitude of conscious and trusting dependence on God. Their rich and expressive emotionality favours the development of gratitude, freedom and sensitivity to the needs and problems of others, as well as selfless service to the younger, weaker, sick, elderly and poor. Participating with the full involvement of positive feelings in the given educational contents and situations, they learn openness to exploring their nation's history, tradition and culture. They develop the spirit of patriotism following family traditions and customs. They learn sensitivity to the beauty of nature which they respect, care for and protect, as well as concern for familiarity with and development of culture.

The child's participation in important moments of life, celebrations and everyday duties through play and organised activities leads them to appreciating in the future the values and dignity of their life and other people's lives, to taking care of their spiritual, psychological and physical development with regard to the earthly and supernatural perspective, to assuming in the future appropriate roles in life, taking up duties related to education, work, life in the family and in the society and serving them adequately employing knowledge and skills in specific areas and situations in life.

Taking into account and appreciating the fact that the family is a natural educational environment for a child, in which their personality is developed, where they form basic habits and receive the patterns of behaviour, the teacher establishes permanent cooperation with the parents.⁵³ Properly organised cooperation between the two educational environments in the transfer of the system of norms and values, as well as in the integral development and education of the child, is based on clearly outlined principles included in the programme.

5. DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS AND PATRIOTIC FEELINGS IN SISTERS SERVANTS' NURSERIES⁵⁴

In this context, Sisters Servants consciously undertake in their pre-schools–nurseries the responsible task of skilfully supporting children in the development of higher emotions, including religious and patriotic feelings. It is accompanied by the awareness that quantitative and qualitative changes in the development of affections take place when the child is provided with various and fairly purposefully selected opportunities for experiencing them, when they come into contact with sources triggering emotional processes. Emotional bonds, e.g. comradeship and friendship, can appear only in properly proceeding interactions, in determined, as far as their specific features are concerned, interpersonal relationships. If we have in mind an intentional educational influence whose aim is to appropriately model the course of the development of feelings, then we chiefly mean the organisation of children's activities as well as the conditions directly affecting their type⁵⁵.

⁵³ See: *ibid.*, p. 362-368.

⁵⁴ The examples of children's experiences related to developing religious and patriotic feelings were taken from the statements by Sr. Teresa Golemo, Sr. Barbara Bartuś and Sr. Anna Filipczuk, teachers in Sisters Servants' of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God Nursery – State Integrated Preschool in Dębica.

⁵⁵ S. Gerstmann, *Rozwój uczuć*, *op. cit.*, p. 9-10.

However, this intention cannot translate into an imbalance in the harmonious development of the child's personality, e.g. by putting too much stress on one of its aspects in the educational process. Knowing and respecting a child's developmental capacities, we can successfully lead them to changes in behaviour and experiences through intentional education, supporting them on their path to maturity, including emotional maturity. The idea is to influence systematically and purposefully the development of cognitive structures, to transfer knowledge and develop abilities using the pupil's activities, which constitutes a pre-school-aged child's best way of learning.

The organisation of the day in a nursery, according to E. Bojanowski's recommendations, expressed the truth that „every day is as if a shortened life,” and therefore all that its content includes is reflected not only in classes, but in the whole of the life of the nursery. According to Bojanowski's guidelines, therefore, the daily schedule contained all elements inherent to the human life – religious practices, play, learning, work – and it offered numerous opportunities for acquiring the skills of establishing interpersonal relationships and cultural behaviour. It included time for joy, for expressing gratitude, silence, sharing, taking care of younger children, coping with difficulties, entrusting oneself to God's providence.

Presently, in Sisters Servants' nurseries particular days of the week and their character also refer to the content accompanying human life in all its complexity and are reflected in educational-didactic and care activities. Every day has its ascribed patron and the resultant characteristic atmosphere, in which particular classes and various forms of activity included in the daily schedule are realised⁵⁶.

Developing religious and patriotic feelings is not isolated from the whole of didactic-educational activities in Sisters Servants' nurseries; on the contrary, it constitutes its complementary element. The general pro-

⁵⁶ E. Piekarz, „Obszar społeczny,” in: *Wychowanie integralne dziecka w wieku przedszkolnym według koncepcji pedagogicznej bł. Edmunda Bojanowskiego*, Sr. M. L. Opieła (ed.), Dębica 2010, p. 111.

gramme and style of activities in this area is expressed in the calendar of nursery events, meetings and celebrations, which was devised according to E. Bojanowski's guidelines and with regard to the contemporary needs. It assumes developing religious knowledge and sensitivity, cultivating the spirit of patriotism, celebrating national, church, family and nursery holidays, as well as cooperating closely with the family. Events and celebrations planned for every month are harmoniously linked with one another in the rhythm of the calendar, church year and school year. They permeate one another and complement the events related to the seasons, religious and national holidays in the rhythm of particular days, weeks and months.

Overlooking in education the things which faith and religion bring into our lives would result in it not encompassing a whole human as a person, but referring to an individual reduced to its natural, biopsychosocial sphere. E. Bojanowski warns against separating the spiritual sphere from everyday life and the related experiences, or religious, moral and patriotic education from physical and social education. In the contents of the Bible – Divine Revelation and the history of salvation – the educator finds principles and role models, which are very important for developing higher emotions. He or she connects it all with the rhythm of the surrounding world, as well as the nation's culture, history and tradition. Bojanowski assigns a special role to the nursery, which, remaining under the protection of the Church, assumes the part of godparents, or the concern for raising children in Christian faith and morality. Thus, the concern for the development of the child, and even more so of their religious and patriotic feelings, is not only the specificity of the educational programme, but the duty of the nursery.

Educational-didactic contents, which lead to an influence on inspiring and developing religious and patriotic feelings, are introduced in accordance with the child's perceptual capabilities. These contents are introduced according to a spiral curriculum; as a result, the child comes back during his or her preschool education to the information conveyed by the teacher in order to learn about it in a more detailed way and to consolidate it. To achieve it, the teacher establishes proper

procedures employing verbal methods, based on observation and with a dominance of children's mental activities. She skilfully uses various means and forms of work to present knowledge, shape the imagination, feelings, as well as socio-moral, aesthetic and other notions and attitudes. The basic activities include chats, tales, conversations and games, which are organised and enriched by the teacher with the use of literature, poems, riddles, sayings, songs and picture stories on various topics adapted to the discussed content. According to E. Bojanowski's recommendation, a full variety of contents should be employed here – e.g. secular, religious, historic stories, or secular, religious and folk songs⁵⁷. Presentations are very significant – showing children objects, pictures, phenomena, which is accompanied by the word, helpful in observation and experience; trips, films, stagings, practical forms, physical activity, self-care exercises etc. – directed at encouraging children to take up creative and skills-training activities.

6. DEVELOPING RELIGIOUS FEELINGS

E. Bojanowski stressed the significance of religious values in education as the foundation for future personal life, as his highest goal was for the human to become God's image and likeness on Earth, or to achieve their humanity⁵⁸.

The curriculum followed in nurseries includes rich educational-didactic contents, important for developing religious feelings. Firstly, the child is introduced to the world of religious symbols and develops respect for the sign of the cross and other symbols. Next, the subject of faith is addressed together with introducing daily prayer. Children learn the content of prayers by saying them together. Pupils willingly participate in prayer and submit their prayer intentions praying not only for their families, but also e.g. for other children, for the sick, drivers, the

⁵⁷ AGDS, B-h-2, k.6r.

⁵⁸ AGSD, B-h-1, k.18v.

whole world etc. Those intentions are usually related to their current experiences in the family and at preschool, to their joys or concerns, to the topic of classes. Through learning the truth that through the sacrament of baptism we become the children of God who loves and takes care of us all, children begin to trust and love God and other people. These contents are related to showing Baby Jesus as a model to be imitated and an incentive to entrust themselves to Mother of God and guardian angels through prayer. Children become familiar with the Holy Bible as the Word of God addressed to people, and with biblical figures and lives of the saints as models of living faith.

Teaching children about different religious practices, showing their significance in the life of a person who believes in God, as well as children's active participation in them is an opportunity for the practical experience of the relationship with God and expression of their trusting faith; it serves the purpose of encouraging them to remember about Him in everyday life and to show Him faithfulness. In the course of the liturgical year, these practices take various dimensions, and this process has an effect of modifying the expressed feelings and identifying one's various sensations in the context of e.g. the joy of Easter, Lenten penance, sadness and compassion related to Christ's passion etc. Thus, by actively participating in current events and holidays, children are introduced to keeping traditions connected with preparing and experiencing those festivals, to worshipping Jesus present in the Eucharist etc.

The introduction of these contents is related to referring to the close relationships between the children and the parents, and their religious feelings are developed on the basis of love, trust and a sense of security. With time, the child will be able to differentiate their own existential experiences and refer them to the supernatural reality and to absolute values. Holidays, and especially Christmas Eve celebrated together with the family in the nursery, are organised in such a way that they serve the purpose of strengthening mutual bonds and developing religious feelings.

Becoming familiar with religious notions and developing imagination, as well as active participation in prayer practices is connected with

showing love to other people, becoming sensitive to the poor, sick and those in need in our closest surroundings, but also e.g. to those in the missions. Taking up such activities in a systematic way, children not only acquire the abilities to connect faith with good deeds, but by doing works of mercy, they learn to control their emotions, make sacrifices; they learn compassion, generosity, to show kindness, concern for other people, to renounce the satisfaction of their needs for the benefit of others, not expecting compensation for the good they have done. On the basis of positive emotions originating from children's faith and of motivation inspired by somebody's example, children can experience great and sincere joy. Generosity and sharing with others develops in them a sense of responsibility for other people, but also strengthens their self-esteem.

E. Bojanowski's guidelines have not become obsolete and are still followed in Sisters Servants' nurseries. Great importance is attached to reminding children about life in the presence of God. With regard to children's developmental condition, E. Bojanowski recommended doing that by rejecting verbalism and influencing children's imagination instead, placing religious symbols and pictures in nurseries. Their purpose was not solely to decorate, but to be an expression of faith and the place of experiencing it. According to E. Bojanowski's guidelines, an image of the Eye of Providence is placed in every classroom in order to remind children that God sees all, that He watches over people, cares for them and looks after them. In the „religious corner,” the children gather for prayer, and another religious element is a bulletin board display on religious topics, suiting the current liturgical period. Children are very keen on learning religious poems and songs, especially those with motions, in which they expressively show their feelings. They also often sing them spontaneously in free play or when they are colouring. They perform religious scenes with willingness and joy; they participate in nativity plays, performing their roles with great commitment, experiencing them as an important and solemn event.

Just like E. Bojanowski recommended teaching children to pray, it is also nowadays that every day begins with common prayer. Apart

from talking to God, it should sensitise children not only to their own needs, but also to the needs of other people. For that reason, they are willing to present their requests as well as those of the people close to them in spontaneous prayer, but they also see the need to thank God for the graces they have received. Prayer is to help in one's worries and in establishing a personal relationship with God. Holy Mass, in which the children participate with the parents and preschool staff to mark the important events throughout the year, is experienced as the centre of the nursery life and celebrations. Children are prepared for it beforehand. In order to highlight the significance of important holidays, celebrations begin with experiencing the Eucharist together, in which the children are included by singing the psalm, reciting the Prayer of the Faithful and preparing the offerings, while the parents join in the singing and read the lections. Apart from the children, whole families willingly participate in the mass, which means that in spite of work and numerous duties they perceive its value and are able to find time for it⁵⁹.

The curriculum devised according to E. Bojanowski's concept also includes reading selected fragments of the Bible – the Old and the New Testament. Children listen to the history of salvation with curiosity, they ask numerous questions, easily identify themselves with the figures they hear about, openly express the emotions triggered by the story and join the storytelling. On the basis of the examples of the biblical figures' behaviour or Jesus' guidelines they are able to distinguish good from evil, attempt to evaluate their own behaviour, understand the need for changing what is inappropriate. Reflection on their own conduct, which usually takes place at the end of the day or week, helps children to correct their behaviour and conduct on the path to emotional and socio-moral maturation.

⁵⁹ See: E. Wieloch, „Wychowanie dziecka według koncepcji pedagogicznej bł. Edmunda Bojanowskiego a rozwijanie postaw społeczno – moralnych u dzieci w wieku przedszkolnym,” in: *Wychowanie integralne...*, Sr. L. Opiela (ed.), op. cit., p. 147-148.

7. DEVELOPING PATRIOTIC FEELINGS

Patriotic education in the nursery through discussing social topics related to the family, hometown, region and Poland provides a natural opportunity for developing children's patriotic feelings. These are related to the contents from the religious sphere, according to the way it results from the calendar, customs and Polish traditions. The development of patriotic feelings is influenced by generating interest in one's closest surroundings through making children familiar with the name of their hometown, its emblem, public utility facilities, history and traditions. Gradually, these interests are broadened to include the history and culture of the region and homeland. An important role is played by learning about the national symbols, such as the flag, anthem, emblem, making children aware that they belong to the Polish nation, locating historically important places and areas on the map. Telling children the legends related to the creation of Poland and familiarising them with its history as well as of its kings and national heroes is an opportunity for them to admire and become interested in the people and values they learn about. It is all related to the process which is important for the child and which engages them emotionally – the process of identifying themselves with particular people or symbols, of finding their place in space, of becoming aware of the course of time and the development of both an individual and the community within it; as well as to learning about the significance of history etc.

E. Bojanowski recommended that no story should be read, but instead it should be told by the teacher, who in this way will give an example of a proper attitude towards the values included in the presented contents. The aim is to inspire love of the homeland personified in people, culture, land and respect for the national symbols, the state anthem and history. Verbal message is strictly related to life, rich ceremonials and practical use in specific situations, such as anniversaries and national holidays.

In E. Bojanowski's concept, patriotic education is closely linked to religious-moral education, as patriotic values in our national culture

have Christian roots, and the concern for the good of the homeland is the moral duty of every citizen. E. Bojanowski, for whom love of the homeland came right after the love of God, and all things Polish were values worthy of respect and sacrifice, undertook tireless work to save the monuments of national and especially folk culture from becoming forgotten, and strove to inspire the national and patriotic spirit. He referred to the homeland as „Mother,” which is especially significant with regard to nature, religion and history. He wrote about „Mother Earth – Mother Church – Mother Homeland”⁶⁰, with these three realities constituting a full context of human life, development and education. Just like a small and helpless child needs the help of his or her mother, who is the first „shelter,” the „place” in which a person discovers their distinctiveness and bond with another human being, when this child grows up they need a confirmation of their social identity through identifying themselves with the nation, and of their spiritual identity as a child of God and a member of the Church. In order for a person to be able to determine themselves, know who they are, they have to reach to the „roots” of their origins, tradition, past. They need to have a strong sense of their own identity – not only Christian, but also national⁶¹. Being aware of this fact, E. Bojanowski devoted a lot of attention and space in the educational process to the question of patriotic education, which is highly emotionally charged and thus ensures building deep emotional relationships, modelled on the bond with the mother. He saw in it the best way to revive the nation, in which the basic reference was the model of the family – the natural family supported by the nursery, the national family and the model of the Holy Family. Therefore, in developing patriotic feelings in Sisters Servants’ nurseries, special attention is still paid to patriotic education in reference to the child’s feelings connected with their relationships in the family, especially with the mother.

The whole preschool community celebrates not only religious festivals, but also national holidays, e.g. 3 May – Constitution Day, 11 No-

⁶⁰ See: AGSD, B-i-1, k.4r.

⁶¹ See: E. Wieloch, *Wychowanie dziecka...*, op. cit., p. 148-149.

vember - National Independence Day. In everyday life in the nursery, children are introduced to worshipping God and Christian symbols, but also national symbols, such as the emblem of Poland, flag, anthem, all in due proportions. Learning the truth about God's Providence, children are able to devoutly entrust in prayer not only themselves, but also their homeland; with great enthusiasm they learn about and experience important events related to it. Sisters teach children about Polish monuments, the works of national culture and history; they tell stories and fairy tales which portray these topics. They familiarise pupils with historical events related e.g. to regaining independence, as well as with the figures of national heroes; they teach them patriotic poems and songs. Children ask many questions, talk about their experiences or relate what they have learnt at home; they say with pride that they know something, they have seen something or been somewhere.

In the tradition of nurseries, the National Independence Day is celebrated by children as the Polish Children's Day. On this day, children wear white and red clothes, make white and red flags and decorate the nursery together. It takes many various forms. It is connected to organising the patriotic corner, where children place exhibits, often made according to their own ideas with their parents, or family souvenirs commemorating historical events. The nurseries also organise patriotic gatherings, open for the local community, with historical plays, regional folk dances, reminiscing national heroes, singing patriotic songs with parents and guests, meetings with veterans, memories connected with history and tradition. Children and parents are encouraged to participate in prayer for the homeland, patriotic celebrations and events organised in a given town on the day of the national holiday.

Children also experience together other events important and difficult for our country, such as dramatic national uprisings, or the outbreak of the Second World War, thus deepening the spirit of patriotism and praying for the homeland.

In turn, the things which pupils have learnt and experienced in classes on patriotic topics are often reflected in free play, while the acquired traditions and customs are transferred to their families, as chil-

dren demand that they should be followed. They experience patriotic celebrations in an emotional way; they express their joy, thrill and admiration, as these events are accompanied by a solemn atmosphere and a festive climate. The classes conducted on such occasions become especially significant in children's eyes, which is aided by the special decorations in the classroom, festive clothes, learning about national heroes (boys tend to enjoy listening to stories about national heroes more than girls do), which strengthens the sense of national pride. Children's patriotic feelings are enriched and accumulate under the influence of increasingly broader contacts with the culture, history and nature of the homeland, as children become familiar with and entrenched in the traditions of the nation.

Educating for the love of the homeland, Sisters Servants teach love and respect for Christian, family and preschool traditions, linking them to specific dates, holidays or seasons. For example, December is the month in which the topic of patriotism related to traditions and celebrations of Christmas is introduced. Children learn about the traditions and customs followed in particular regions of Poland.

The issues concerning the region and the whole Poland are addressed especially in November and May, and adapted to historical events which are then commemorated. In the groups of older children, pupils receive more detailed information about this matter; the children themselves look for images and easy content in books or albums; they get to know legends; the meaning of certain words (such as „a partisan”) is explained to them. In May, when the topic concerning 3 May is addressed – St. Mary the Queen of Poland and the Constitution Day – another commemorative patriotic corner is organised; the children are familiarised with the story of the siege of Jasna Góra and its heroes, e.g. rev. Kordecki.

In January, February, March and April, the classes contain references to such issues as good, beauty, freedom, responsibility, charity – in the context of patriotic and religious education.

Native traditions and customs introduce children to common celebrations and they show them the beauty of their homeland, the richness

of its history and tradition. Moreover, Sisters Servants and the parents organise walks and field trips to places of national remembrance and historical events. They familiarise children with regional traditions, clothes and dances, which is at the same time linked to organising celebrations or plays on national or patriotic topics, and is mostly done in the convention of play, drama, children's active participation. These forms are valuable educational situations which favour the development, formation and expression of children's emotions.

In this context, an important place in the life of the nursery, complementary for the development of children's emotions, is occupied by its own traditions and events. These include celebrating the anniversaries related to the life of Bl. Edmund Bojanowski as well as children's name days and birthdays, the custom of praying for the health of children who are sick, Mother's Day, Grandmother's and Grandfather's Day, Children's Day and others.

CONCLUSION

Linking different aspects of life and children's relationships with other people, communities, God and homeland in the rich rituals in the nursery helps children not only to develop higher feelings, but also to mature emotionally, which is so important in ordering the world of their experiences, relations with themselves, other people, close environment and values. It constitutes a rich source of children's experiences related to their active participation in the abovementioned particular everyday and festive forms. In this way, religiosity is not the love of an abstract spiritual being, and patriotism is not the love of an abstract political being, but they are the resultants of other types of love the child knows from their experiences. The child also becomes convinced that it cannot be exclusively a kind of an inner attitude, but it also has to be expressed in social reality. Such expression, closely related to positive higher emotions, should be developed and directed from an early age, firstly by the

family and later, in the direction selected by them, supported by the environment and educational institutions.

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SUMMARY

The aim of the present article is to analyse the extent and the manner in which the development of religious and patriotic feelings is implemented in the educational work of Sisters Servants with preschool-aged children. The context for the discussed issue is provided by the questions of the psychosocial development of children in the period of middle childhood as well as the prob-

lem of the education system according to E. Bojanowski. The preschool age is a period in which the development of higher feelings is possible, although their full bloom occurs only during adolescence, as long as the cognitive, emotional and social development proceed properly. Religious and patriotic emotions are included in the category of higher feelings. The conditions, requirements and models from the family and preschool environment affect children's emotional development and have a beneficial or undesirable influence on the developmental changes in the sphere of pupils' emotional personality. Religious education supporting the development of such feelings, implemented in Sisters Servants' nurseries, includes for instance entrusting oneself to God's providence, expressing gratitude to God and other people, sharing, learning prayers and religious songs, celebrating religious holidays etc. Sisters Servants implement E. Bojanowski's guidelines which concern treating religious symbols and images placed in the nurseries as an expression of faith and signs determining the place of experiencing it. Religious practices children are introduced to are related to the liturgical season (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.). Patriotic education is realised, among others, by celebrating national holidays, recounting historical events and tales of their heroes, teaching patriotic songs and poems to children. The development of patriotic feelings is related to inspiring interest in the closest surroundings (one's hometown, its emblem, history, traditions), then in the region and the whole of the homeland.

Keywords

higher feelings, early education, a person's integral development, educating through an educator's life example